



*“Thank you for the style and type of discussion that invited people to dream about what the North Rainier Urban Village could become [and] for hearing the needs and listening to the concerns of people who are Blind and Deaf Blind in regards to the priorities of neighborhood planning.”*

-Pat Copeland  
Lighthouse for the Blind

### Background on Neighborhood Planning Outreach

In the early '90s, Seattle community members worked together to develop growth plans for their neighborhoods. Today, these plans are in the process of being updated to reflect the changing needs and priorities of each neighborhood.

The Neighborhood Planning Outreach and Engagement Program works with a few selected neighborhoods each year, in partnership with the Department of Planning and Development, to engage community members in updating their neighborhood plans.

The Program strives to include the diverse array of stakeholders that make up each community, including historically-underrepresented populations.

### Planning Outreach Liaison (POL) Model

As the City of Seattle began preparing for the 2009 Neighborhood Plan Updates, they recognized the need for a more inclusive outreach and engagement process. In response, the Planning/Public Outreach Liaison (POL) model was developed to reach out to and civically engage historically-underrepresented communities through trusted and qualified, bilingual and/or bicultural liaisons. POLs are respected members of their community and are perceived as completely neutral — not representatives of the City or political/community advocates. Trusted, neutral POLs are critical to the successful engagement of members of their communities.

#### **POL responsibilities include but are not limited to:**

- Spreading the word about Neighborhood Plan Updates and Status Reports
- Extending invitations to POL-hosted and facilitated workshops conducted in their native language and with the provision of culturally-aligned refreshments and childcare services
- Extending invitations to city-hosted neighborhood planning workshops (and provide interpretation at workshops when applicable)
- Recording workshop notes in native language and later translating comments into English
- Translating written materials, invitations, and planning documents



# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM:

## 2009 AT A GLANCE



**Over 1,200  
community members  
participated in a total  
of 81 meetings  
in Othello,  
North Beacon Hill,  
and North Rainier  
throughout the  
2009 neighborhood  
update process.**

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The 2009 Neighborhood Plan Update (NPU) process took place in three Southeast Seattle neighborhoods:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Way at Holly (Othello)
- North Beacon Hill
- North Rainier

The Department of Neighborhoods, in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Development, implemented the principles of the Race & Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) and the Translation & Interpretation Policy in performing outreach and engagement to historically-underrepresented communities.

### Historically-underrepresented Communities

Planning Outreach Liaisons successfully engaged over 1,200 historically-underrepresented participants in Southeast Seattle, and reached over 3,500 historically-underrepresented community members with the message of neighborhood planning and its relevance to their everyday lives. Participants were stakeholders who lived, worked, or played in the three neighborhoods.

Participants represented thirteen communities and/or language groups who traditionally have not been engaged in civic processes:

#### Community

#### Native Language

Cambodian.....	Khmer
Chinese.....	Mandarin and Cantonese
Ethiopian.....	Amharic, Tigrinya, Oromiffa
Eritrean.....	Tigrinya
Filipino/Filipino American.....	Tagalog
Latino/Hispanic.....	Spanish
Somali.....	Somali
Vietnamese.....	Vietnamese

African Americans

Native Americans & Alaska Natives

People Living with Disabilities

Seniors

Youth